

Senator William S. Cohen



Biographical Sketch

William S. Cohen was elected to the United States Senate on November 7, 1978. Prior to his election as Senator, Cohen served three terms in the House of Representatives representing Maine's Second Congressional District.

Background

Cohen was born in Bangor, Maine, on August 28, 1940. He graduated from Bangor High School in 1958, and was a James Bowdoin scholar at Bowdoin College, from which he graduated with an A.B. in Latin in 1962. He received his LL.B. cum laude from Boston University Law School in 1965. While at Boston University, he served as a member of the law review and its editorial board. Cohen was admitted to the bar in 1965 and became a partner in a Bangor law firm. He was assistant editor-in-chief of the Journal of the American Trial Lawyers Association from 1965 to 1966.

In 1968, Cohen became Assistant County Attorney for Penobscot County and also served as a staff member on the Governor's State Credit Research Committee. He also maintained an active interest in academic life, serving as an instructor at Husson College in Bangor in 1968 and at the University of Maine at Orono from 1968 to 1972.

Public Life

Cohen was first elected to public office as a city councilor in Bangor, a position in which he served from 1969 through 1972; he was chosen mayor of Bangor for the 1971-72 term. Cohen was elected to the Congress in 1972 after an intense campaign that included a 600-mile walk across the Second Congressional District "to find out what is on people's minds." Walking became Cohen's political trademark, and he has continued to walk regularly through the towns and cities he represents, talking informally with his constituents.

Cohen was re-elected in 1974, winning over 71 per cent of the vote, and again in 1976, with more than 77 per cent of the vote. In 1974, Cohen participated in the historic impeachment inquiry conducted by the House Judiciary Committee.

In 1978, Cohen unseated incumbent U.S. Senator William D. Hathaway. In his first statewide campaign, Cohen garnered 57 per cent of the vote to Hathaway's 34 per cent in a contest which attracted national attention. The remainder was split among three independent candidates.

Senate Assignments

Cohen is a member of the Armed Services and Governmental Affairs Committees, as well as the Special Committee on Aging. He is Chairman of the Select Committee on Indian Affairs.

On the Armed Services Committee, he is Chairman of the Subcommittee on Force Projection and Seapower and is a member of the Subcommittee on Strategic and Theater Nuclear Forces, and the Subcommittee on Manpower and Personnel.

Cohen also serves as a member of the Governmental Affairs Committee's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, and the Subcommittee on Energy, Nuclear Proliferation, and Government Processes. He is the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management.

Awards

Cohen was selected as a fellow at Harvard's John F. Kennedy Institute of Politics in 1972. During 1974, TIME magazine selected him as one of America's 200 future leaders. In early 1975, he was named as one of the Ten Outstanding Young Men in America by the U.S. Junior Chamber of Commerce.

In 1975, the Boston University Law School honored Cohen with its prestigious "Young Lawyer's Chair," and in 1976 the Boston University Alumni Association presented him with its Award for Distinguished Public Service. In 1978, he was named "New Englander of the Year" by the New England Society of New York City.

Interests

An avid reader, Cohen has written poetry in his spare time for many years. A volume of his poems, *Of Sons and Seasons*, was published in 1978. A second book, *Roll Call*, a journal of Cohen's first year in the Senate, was published in 1981.

Named to the all-state basketball team in high school and to the all-state and New England all-star Hall of Fame basketball teams in college, Cohen continues to play basketball as well as several other sports. He is the regular pitcher for the Republicans in the annual congressional baseball game.

Cohen is married to the former Diane Dunn of Fairfield, Maine. They have two sons, Kevin and Christopher.

Offices

Senator Cohen's Washington office is located at 1251 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (Phone: 202-224-2523).

He also maintains five offices in Maine. Their locations and phone numbers are:

Federal Building, Room 2054
151 Forest Avenue
P.O. Box 1938
Portland, Maine 04104
(207-780-3575)

Federal Building, Room 204
Harlow Street
P.O. Box 1384
Bangor, Maine 04401
(207-947-6504)

855 Lisbon Street
Promenade Mall
Lewiston, Maine 04240
(207-784-6969)

154 State Street
Augusta, Maine 04330
(207-623-3549)

523 Main Street
Presque Isle, Maine 04769
(207-764-3266)